



Testimony of

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Public Health Committee Public Hearing

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SB 460 An Act Concerning Hospital Conversions And Other Matters Affecting Hospitals

HB 5571 An Act Concerning Certificate of Need Requirements, Hospital Conversions and Medical Foundations

Senator Gerrantana, Representative Johnson and members of the Public Health Committee:

I am Joanne Chapin, a staff nurse in Ambulatory Surgery at New Milford Hospital, President of the New Milford RNs and Jurisdictional VP of Healthcare at AFT Connecticut. AFT Connecticut represents approximately 29,000 professional workers across the state including 7,000 healthcare workers. Thank you for giving me the opportunity to submit testimony in support of SB 460 and HB 5571.

The pressure to survive in today's challenging healthcare environment has led many of our community hospitals looking to partner with other non-profit institutions, or one of the large for profit healthcare corporations. I understand that with the dramatic changes in the industry that we cannot stop mergers or conversions, but it is important for Connecticut to have a plan in place and to control how they proceed. We must protect the communities and the members of these communities who are employed by these hospitals.

As our healthcare system goes through these major changes, will patients continue to receive high quality care or will healthcare decisions now be subject to profitability and the bottom line. Like any corporation, investors profits always comes first and Connecticut patients should not have to be concerned if their care fits into these profits.

At this time within current statue there is little the state can do to protect the patients, communities and workers interests. SB 460 and HB 5571 strengthen current statues by expanding the ability of the Attorney General to investigate community impact and to demand transparency.

We must also remember that "conversion" can also mean a non-profit merging with another non-profit institution. As a staff nurse in what was a small community hospital, I can report firsthand what occurs when a large non-profit network merges with a smaller facility. It has left me with great concern for my patients and community as services have been moved off site or closed. The community and my coworkers have lost faith in the networks commitment to the survival of our institution as it cherry picks profitable services and patients, cuts staff and behaves more like a for profit. The lack of transparency in the network's plans has left our community and staff vulnerable.

I am supporting SB460 and HB 5571 to help those patients, communities and healthcare workers who, as of now, have very little protection and whose need for responsive, quality healthcare must continue to be met. Please pass SB 460 and HB 5571. Thank you.